

Good evening – My name is Michael Jennings and I'm here opposing the elimination of the Brain Injury Association of Connecticut (BIAC) operating grant which is funded through the Department of Social Services under the line item "Services for Persons with Disabilities".

I had a bad Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), 10 years ago. A couple years later, I started attending a Brain Injury Support Group where BIAC suggested ways for me to help myself and later fellow survivors, which has given my life a real purpose. Not only helping BIAC but subsequently becoming a Town Commissioner and a Director for an Assisted Living Center. Having suffered a Brain Injury myself, I understand the issues faced by the many brain injury survivors that are out there. I've come to accept how Brain Injuries are permanent and support is required for years after. Survivors come to my BIAC support group, still having issues, 20 years after their injury.

I have been telling the Gaylord hospital residents who also come to my BIAC support group that they can contact BIAC (and I give them instructions how) after they're discharged. So they're not totally on their own after a few months in a hospital and/or a rehab center. Poor memory is a common brain injury symptom, so they can't be expected to remember everything they are told in the hospital. Many people have come or contacted me really upset because of issues that they don't know how to deal with; where some were even crying.

To use logic that my mother taught me, an ounce of prevention to continue BIAC's funding will result in a pound of cure in minimizing future charges to other state agencies